

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Route 31 Bridge over CSX Railroad
Pennington Borough, Mercer County
Public Information Center
Thursday July 30, 2015, 5 – 8 PM

The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), committed to developing transportation improvements that best balance transportation needs, the environment, community concerns and cost, will hold a **Public Information Center** to inform residents and businesses of the **proposed design of the Route 31 Bridge Replacement over CSX Railroad, Culvert Replacement over Seminary Creek, and pavement improvements**. You are encouraged to actively participate by providing comments at the meeting, by mail, or by e-mail.

The Meeting

The Public Information Center will be held on **Thursday, July 30, 2015 from 5:00 to 8:00 PM at the Pennington Borough Municipal Building, 30 North Main Street, Pennington**. You will have an opportunity to review exhibits of the proposed project, ask questions, and discuss any issues with representatives from the NJDOT.

Project Purpose

This project is to replace the structurally deficient bridge over the CSX railroad and the structurally deficient culvert over Seminary Creek. The pavement between MP 6.84 to MP 7.33 also needs repair.

Project Description

The proposed design that will be presented is a result of input received at previous information centers.

1. **Route 31, Bridge over CSX:** The existing superstructure and piers will be demolished and there will be a partial demolition of the abutments. The bridge will be replaced with a single span 103'-2" steel girder superstructure on concrete abutments and spread footings. The existing alignment and a 23' vertical under-clearance will be maintained, and the proposed cross section across the bridge will consist of one 12'-0" through lane, one 10'-0" right shoulder, and a 5'-0" sidewalk in both directions. The proposed parapets will reflect most of the original historical characteristics.
2. **Route 31, Roadway:** The existing pavement box and raised median will be removed from MP 6.84 to MP 7.33 and replaced with a 30" deep pavement box. Two water quality structures will be provided for the two watersheds north and south of the bridge to meet NJDEP requirements. The storm drainage systems were designed to convey peak flow during a 25-year storm event and to control the spread of storm water across the pavement during a 10-year storm event.
3. **Route 31, Culvert over Seminary Creek:** The new culvert will be an in-kind-replacement with a 3-sided precast concrete culvert providing the same overall length and the same hydraulic opening as the existing culvert. The roadway will provide one 12' wide travel lane and one 10' wide shoulder in each direction. An existing collapsed concrete headwall will be replaced in-kind and an existing 15" storm drain outfall will be replaced by an 18" outfall with new headwall and riprap scour hole.

Proposed Reforestation Plan

The New Jersey No Net Loss Reforestation Act, enacted by the New Jersey Senate and General Assembly and approved on January 29, 2001, requires any state entity to hold a public forum when one or more acres of deforestation occurs in an area owned or maintained by that entity, and to present to the public the deforestation and reforestation plans for that project. Opportunity for public comment on the plans will be provided.

Environmental Review

The environmental review and analysis was performed in accordance with federal laws and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, in conformance with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, and pursuant to National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. The purpose of this analysis was to evaluate the proposed project with respect to the positive and negative social, economic, and environmental impacts. FHWA approved the project as a Categorical Exclusion. Application will be made to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) for CARFA, Freshwater Wetlands, and Stormwater Management approvals.

SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office)

Investigations for cultural resources within the project's Area of Potential Effect (APE) found the Delaware and Bound Brook (Reading) Railroad Historic District (the Historic District) property eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. While not individually eligible, the Route 31 Bridge over the CSX Railroad (the Route 31 Bridge) is a contributing element to the Historic District. Therefore, the replacement of the Route 31 Bridge will have an adverse effect on the Historic District. Both the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) agreed with the eligibility and effect assessments on February 11, 2014.

The ground disturbance expected for the proposed replacement of the Route 31 Bridge will remain within the existing structure footprint. Additionally, the Phase 1 Archaeological Survey completed by McCormick Taylor in June 2011 (on file at SHPO) concluded that there is no archaeological resource within the established archaeological APE due to past filling, grading and cutting associated with the construction of the railroad. Therefore, no additional archaeological work is required for this proposed project.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) dated April 9, 2014 was signed by FHWA/NJDOT and SHPO to mitigate the project's impacts to the Historic District. The stipulations include the new bridge design reflecting most of the original historical characteristics and the installation of an interpretive sign in proximity to the Route 31 Bridge.

All applicable permits will be applied for from the Department of Environmental Protection and the Delaware & Raritan Canal Commission for the proposed project.

Status

This project is in the Final Design phase. Construction is estimated to cost \$12.5 million and is expected to begin in the summer 2016.

For further information contact:

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